2. There had been delay in fabrication of these vans on account of:—

(a) Procurement of Van's Chassis

(b) Preparation of technical specifications/design and model and finalisation of the same,

(c) Inviting of tenders,

(d) Finalisation of lowest tenderer,

(e) Assigning the job to the lowest tenderer

(f) Periodical inspection and scrutiny of the fabrication job as per specifications,

(g) Withdrawing of 3rd chassis from the contractor when it was noticed that the party was delaying the fabrication job,

(h) Awarding the job to another contractor by floating fresh tenders and observing all the formalities.

3. The C A G. in its report had observed that the expenditure incurred towards pay and allowances of the staff members was infructours since the units could not perform exhibition activities.

4. The Staff members of the Calcutta Van soon after the van became inoperative, were deployed for conducting general exhibition programmes (as a General Unit). Throughout the period, the unit remained occupied while action at Headquarters went on for providing the new van to the units.

5. The staff members of other remaining two units were employed before receiving the vans to do preliminary work. They had to be paid their salary as they were in position.

Jharkhand issue

209. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha has given an ultimatum to the Centre to meet the demand of statehood within a few weeks; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) No such ultimatum has been received by the Central Government from the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha.

(b) Does not arise.

Closing of Indian Embassy in Fiji

210. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the present Fiji Government have moved to close down the Indian Embassy in SUVA; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): (a) Yes, Sir. Our Embassy was closed on May 24, 1990.

(b) Government of India has reiterated its resolve to continue its support for the democratic movement in Fiji and to take all opportunities to voice it's opposition to racial discrimination whatever it's form and wherever it is practised. A statement expressing Government's reaction was laid on the floor of the House on May 24, 1990.

Law and order situation in J & K

211. SHRI JAGADISH JANI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the law and order situation in Jammu and Kashmir has been worsening day by day; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to bring back normalcy and to restore peace in that State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) and (b) The Law and order situation in Jammu & Kashmir is difficult. The Government

is alive to the situation and have taken various measures for restoring normalcy on one hand and containing terrorist/ secessionist activities on the other.

Indians in Pakistani jails

212. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what was the number of Indians in Pakistani jails as on 15th July, 1990; and

(b) what steps Government are taking to secure their release?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): (a) 956.

(b) Efforts to get the Indian prisoners released from Pakistani jails continue. Pursuant to the agreement reached with Pakistan during bilateral talks held last February, all 119 fishermen then in custody in Pakistan were released on 24 and 25 March, 1990. Subsequently 58 Indian civilian prisoners were repatriated on June 7, 1990.

Presidents assent to Kerala bills

213. SHRI E. BALANANDAN: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for in-ordinate delay in according Presidential assent to the Kerala Casual, Temporary and Badli Workers (Wages) Bill passed by the Kerala Legislative Assembly on the 10th August, 1977 and sent to the Central Government in October, 1977 for the assent of the President; and

(b) the position regarding the Kerala Land Reforms (Amendment) Bill, 1980 and the Kerala Blind School Society, Alwaye (Taking over of Management) Bill, 1987?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY) (a) and (b) A statement indicating the position of the 3 Kerala Bills, is enclosed. (*See* below)

Statement

(1) *The Kerala Casual, Temporary and Badli Workers (Wages) Bill*, 1977.

In October, 1977, the Secretary to the Governor of Kerala forwarded the above Bill for obtaining the assent of the President. The issues involved therein entailed prolonged consultation with the various Central Ministries concerned and also the State Govt. Finally, its was decided that the Bill in the form in which it was reserved for the consideration of the President could not be assented to. Accordingly, by his directive dated 18.3.89, the President was pleased to direct the Governor of Kerala to return the Bill to the State Legislature with a message that it may reconsider the Bill and suitably amend it to provide that the law shall not apply to any establishment, factory, plantation, motor-transport undertaking or other undertaking belonging to or under the control of the Central Government.

In October, 1989, the Secretary to the Governor of Kerala forwarded a Bill on the subject as passed by the State Legislature with the modifications suggested in the aforesaid message. The President assented to that Bill on 14-1-90 and this was conveyed to the State Government.

(2) *The Kerala Blind School Society, Alwaye (Taking Over of Management) Bill*, 1987.

In December, 1987, the Secretary to the Governor of Kerala forwarded the above Bill for the consideration of the President. As the Bill was not considered to be constitutionally and legally valid, it could not be assented to. The President with-held his assent from the Bill on 8.9.89 and this was intimated to the State Government.

(3) *The Kerala Land Reforms (Amendment) Bill*, 1980.

In April, 1980, the Secretary to the Governor of Kerala forwarded the above Bill for the consideration of the President. The Bill was not considered to